



TERRY CREWS

ABUSE OF POWER

<https://youtu.be/3Q4sL85cLIQ>

I'm the first guy to pop his pecks at the One Young World Conference. I love this. Man, I got only a little bit of time, so I'm going to get into it real fast. How you doing? Ah, look at all these people! Man, the future is here. I love the future.

First of all, I am here to basically talk about a couple of things. I only have 10 minutes, so I'm going to be really, really short. But toxic masculinity. How many of you guys have heard all that, the phrase toxic masculinity? It has been used a lot. Everybody's been talking about it, you know. Another way I like to put it is basically abusers of power. Okay. You know, I came up from Flint, Michigan. I was an athlete. I played seven years in the NFL. Flint, Michigan was a very depressed area and I also came up in a very, very violent household.

One of my earliest memories was, my father, I probably was like four or five years old. My father punching my mother in the face as hard as he could. That was one of my earliest memories. And you know, through trauma, you learn your lessons. For me, it was, hey, this man, the strongest man I've ever seen, this guy, he uses his power to abuse my mother. I learned simply because I was a man or he was a man, or the people around me who were men, they were more valuable than women. This is how it was for me coming up in Flint, Michigan.

And this is funny because people say, you know, toxic masculinity, I mean don't women do things wrong too and the whole thing, but you got to understand, men and women are very, very different. One thing I noticed coming up in the hood, it was kind of wild because everyone uses their thing to manipulate people. Like, you know, women tend to be manipulated through fear. When I was coming up, the whole thing, if you were, you know, there were, I came up in the crack epidemic where, you know, there were pimps and people who were basically treating women as property and their whole thing was the fear, was to intimidate. My father using fear to intimidate my mother. And he would basically manipulate her through fear.

And I knew that guys would work games like that. You know, where they would either be physical, or they would manipulate through mental means where it's like, hey, you know, they were looking at a girl or whatever and tell her, their date or their wife and tell her that she wasn't pretty enough or she wasn't, that she wasn't going to be around much longer, or they would flirt and make her feel very, very insecure. Because the whole game was that you keep the girl or woman off balance so that she never knows

whether you like her or not. And this was, this was stuff that was told to me when I was a kid, that when I was dating, they were like, hey man, you got to have game. You got to do this thing.

But men tend to be manipulated through pride. And pride is what is the lifeblood of toxic masculinity. When guys are always like, hey man, I bet you, you won't do this, and I bet you I will. And the whole thing, it's about, you know, the challenge, you know, if you ever see five men walking somewhere, they're probably on their way to do something really stupid.

I'm just telling you because there's nobody there to calm them down. And let me tell you something. The perfect example of toxic masculinity I can give is let's say you have a restaurant, and a restaurant has a sign in the bathroom. And it says, hey, all employees must wash their hands. But you notice when the boss comes in, who's a man, and if the boss is a guy, he's going to come in and you notice the boss never washes his hands. And so, he goes in, he goes in the kitchen and he's touching the food. He's doing his thing. And employees are like, man, I don't think the boss ever washed his hand.

So, what happens is somebody has to tell him, and it's usually the manager and they tell the manager to go over there and tell him and the whole deal. And all of a sudden, the manager goes over to him, he says boss, I'm so sorry, we noticed you didn't wash your hands. Could you please wash your hands? And the boss says: 'Oh, thank you for telling me, you're fired.'

Then all the employees immediately know, never ever confront the boss about anything. Now you have slipped into a toxic environment, very, very slowly. All the employees are now behind enemy lines. Now they are, if you ever, ever come up to the boss and say anything to him, you are now at risk. You are now a problem that needs to be eradicated, instead of an employee that has good suggestions. And I'm trying to tell you, I was a part of this. I was guilty. I believe because I was a man, I was more valuable, and it was my way or the highway with my own family. And I developed so many bad, bad things that I had to totally eradicate in my life. I had to go to rehab, to beat pornography addiction. There were other things in my life that I knew because of this masculinity issue, this pride issue that did not allow me to hear the truth.

Totally. And I'm going to tell you, man, you guys are young. You guys are the future. The way I came up, you know, as a kid, when I was young, it was like, hey man, nobody wanted to hear me. They were like, just be quiet. You don't know what you're talking about. But I'm here to tell you that you do know. I'm here to tell you that all the young people in here, you know the answer. And I'm here. And if you don't, the fact that you are here and the fact that you are asking questions, because my thing is I never ever want to be the guy that just brings a bunch of answers. I want to be the guy who brings more questions. Because through those questions...

Through those questions, that's where you're going to really figure out, figure out the best way. Because let me tell you, one day is one way and the other day is another way. Now I also want to bring up the Me Too thing. Because being a card-carrying member, ex member of the cult of masculinity, I was able to recognize where my lines got crossed.

There was the head of the Motion Picture department at my agency, WME, a guy named Adam Bennett came up to me in the middle of a party when I was with my wife. And this was two years ago, I was already successful, already done movies, already on Brooklyn Nine-Nine, already doing this stuff. And he walks over to me and he gropes my genitals at a party. And I'm sitting here going, what in the world?

Now I pushed the guy back. I'm like, what is happening? I don't even understand it. Now, I ain't even met the guy. I didn't even know the guy. He worked at my agency, but I didn't know him. But I'm like, what is this dude's problem? So, he comes up to me and then I push him back. He comes back to me again and does it again. I'm like, whoa, whoa. Now, now, now my first thing is to kill him.

You know what, I'm sorry, I can do that. I am 240 pounds. I got a lot of muscle I can make; I can handle it. The masculinity part is like, yo, wait, wait a minute. But then I had to think, wait a minute, I am a black man in America. Wait a minute, wait a minute. He is a very, very rich, successful white man. This is his party. If I hit him, what's going to happen to me. Now we're talking about a power dynamic. Most of these things don't deal with sex. The whole Met Too thing is never about sex. It's about power. It's about people who want to manipulate and use their power and abuse their power. That's what it's about.

Now, one thing, I got some solution, this is the thing that I have a theory. I have a total theory. My theory being that, you know, when I say women are manipulated through fear and guys are manipulated through pride, well, with that theory on the line here, some of these, one of the things that I would like to suggest to young people today, and to the young women in this room and to the young men in this room, one of my suggestions for women to combat this kind of thing is that women be fearless. Fearless! Let me tell you how, the only way I changed, the only way I woke up is my wife left me. My wife left me, and you know what happened? I was like, oh, you know what, go ahead and go. Fine.

You know what, I'm successful. Everybody thinks I'm great. You know, Hollywood doesn't care if you lose your family, they don't care. I get two or three other movies. It's all right. Everybody thinks I'm wonderful. But the problem was, I knew I wasn't wonderful. And she knew I wasn't wonderful. So, all of a sudden, I got a little voice and I said, you know what, maybe it's me. Maybe it's not her, maybe it's not my abusive father, maybe it's not the fact that I'm black, maybe it's not all these other reasons that I could point to and kind of figure it all out, but maybe it's me.

And then I had to come to a deep realization that it was me. It was. Her fearlessness and the fact that she took on the fact that she might be alone. Just, I couldn't believe it actually made me see, because everything that I thought I knew and had, and I was the cool man and I had it all together, it was all a lie. Let me tell you, for men, if pride is the problem, the antidote I'm suggesting is vulnerability, for every man in this room.

The trick to vulnerability is that you have to open up. You have to admit you're not invincible, because invincibility is the myth. Every man is living it. Every guy in here lives his own action movie, all day long. And my wife kept turning on the light and I'm like, I don't want to see the theater. I don't want to see the seats. I don't want to see it. I want to see my own action movie. But the deal is through vulnerability, we can see, we can truly see where we really, really are. And that vulnerability is the only way you can get love. Because the trick is, what's a wow is that guys tend to feel like, okay, I'm going to be tough. I'm going to be steel. I'm cold steel. I'm dirty Harry. I'm all these movies where, you know, all of a sudden, the bullets just ping off me and we know that's not true.

Vulnerability says I'm hurt. Vulnerability says I have been through trauma. And because of my therapy and because of what I've been through, I was able to recognize when my own lines were crossed. Because this is the thing, there are people who would say you were too big to be assaulted. You're too strong for have someone sexually assault you. And I said, even if I had to beat him up, does that mean I wasn't assaulted? No, I was violated. And a lot of times guys pretend they weren't. In the military, in fraternities, in colleges

and schools, things that have been, you know, lines have been crossed, and you'll never, you are too prideful to admit.

And you deal with this trauma. And then to the point where, when it's too late. People are on a clock tower shooting at the students. They're in Vegas shooting at a crowd in concert. This stuff comes out in different ways. And if we don't learn as men, how to be vulnerable, and I'm not saying you have to be public, but what I am saying is that you have to find someone you love, you care about, and someone who cares about you and loves you, and you have to share and open up. Because let me tell you, man, I've seen the toughest, toughest men crumble, crumble.

And, you know, people determine winners way too early. Like, hey, he won. He won this. He did that. He did it. And they're young, and then you wait a few and you really see the results. And I had so many women come to me about man, Terry I've been abused. I've been sexually molested. But then what flipped me out was that there was so many men after I came public, so many men all over the world were telling me that they were molested too. And it really opened me up to see that this thing is not a witch hunt. It's a fumigation. Me Too, Me too tells what exactly is going on.

And let me tell you, there's a word that a lot of people use in these circles, silence is violence. Your predator, anyone who's giving you that kind of trauma depends on your silence, they depend on you being quiet. They depend on you being scared. They depend on you not telling them to go wash his hands. But I'm telling you, my wife told me I need to go wash my hands. She was fearless. I'm here to tell you that this era, you guys are the future, man. And I have never ever seen a world like this.

Ronan Farrow said, we've crossed the Rubicon. The only thing I can really relate this to is the emancipation proclamation, because people are free now. But remember right after that, if you look it up, I'm just going off American history. I know I'm all over the world right now. But in American history, there was a thing called reconstruction, where you weren't a slave anymore. But if you jaywalked across the street, you get 40 years in prison. There's backlash that comes with this, backlash.

But I promise you, and I promise you this, that when you stand for the right thing and you do the right thing and you tell them to go wash their hands, you, you are going to have the support of good people. Because usually these guys are one in few, and they run a lot of people. They are usually one predator, is responsible for so much damage, it takes them years to get caught. So, I want to thank you for having me here today. It's been a pleasure. And I'm trying to tell you, man, that you guys, you're the future and I love it. It's making me feel good. I only had 10 minutes but thank you very much. I love you. That's all. Ah, thank you.

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